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WAR

As reflected in legends and the accounts of missionaries, there was constant rivalry between the tribes, particularly between those of the eastern and western parts of the island. Wars were frequent and arose from the merest trifles, the principal causes being personal revenge, jealousy, greediness, and want (194, p. 360). Thomson (215, p. 476) states very pertinently that their "traditions are filled with accounts of sanguinary conflicts originating from trivial causes and continued through generations, until one party or the other were entirely exterminated." Disputes over the name of a night of the moon or a breach in etiquette might lead to war (81, vol. 38, p. 136). Generally words and blows were exchanged but people were not actually killed. The first act of war was to burn the hut of one's opponent. However even this did not always provoke war. The importance of the *matatoa* (warriors) in social organization shows the significance of war in the daily life of the island (p. 138).

Various games, principally spear and stone throwing, trained the children and the young men for war. If we may rely on Thomson (215, p. 476) these were the favorite amusements at feasts, even for grown men. A very popular legend, recorded by Roussel (190, p. 426) in 1867, and still well known, tells how young men had mock fights with spears with a blade made of calabash shell: "He hakamaa i te taua pahera" (They were learning the fight of the spears terminating in a calabash shell).

In the recently published manuscript of Father Roussel (190, p. 423) there is a very detailed and interesting account of warfare:

> When war was declared, all those who intended to take part in it smeared themselves with black and spent a sleepless night. They were busy preparing their weapons and hiding their most precious belongings. [There is no hint of human sacrifice or other offerings to the gods to procure favor.]
>
> Before daybreak the warriors set out, followed by their wives and children who accompanied them with protective chants and moans. The women and the children went to the hills nearest the battlefield to witness the victory or defeat of their husbands or fathers.
>
> As soon as their adversaries heard of the expedition they lay in ambush awaiting an opportunity to begin the fight. If they did not feel strong enough, they stayed at home and abandoned themselves to the victors who immediately started to burn and loot. Everything became prey of the flames—huts, sugar cane, and so forth. When all was burnt and looted, the vanquished were carried away indiscriminately, men, women and children, to a place chosen beforehand. On their way they satisfied their private grievances, striking the captives with cudgels was the mildest treatment. Some were buried alive and put into the oven when they died. Some were cut into pieces with an axe or trodden under the feet until their intestines burst forth. Others were burnt gradually until they died. All the cruel devices pagan barbary could invent were put to work against defenseless victims of all ages, sex and status.

A few more details, apparently authentic, are added by Thomson (215, p. 476):

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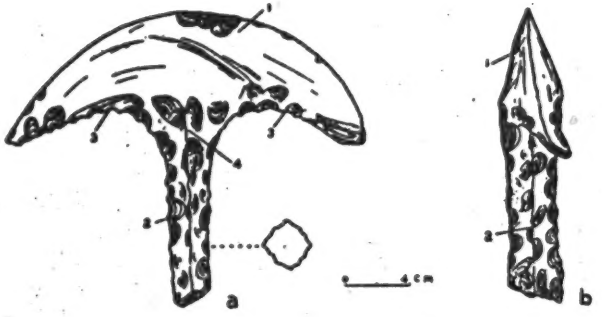

FIGURE 50.—Crescentic implement with prolonged tang (B2195): *a*, front view, crescentic blade (1) 221 mm. wide; greatest thickness in middle line 34 mm.; distal, convex edge sharp throughout, formed by meeting of two inclined planes without secondary chipping; proximal concave edges (3, 3) formed by chipping from both surfaces and leaving median longitudinal edges; tang (2) formed by chipping outward from the middle line from either surface, thus resulting in median longitudinal edges in front and back and also at two sides; width of tang (at point 4) 48 mm., and thickness 33 mm.; width at proximal end 24 mm., and thickness 29 mm.; length of tang (from point 4) 101 mm. *b*, side view, showing sharp edge of blade (1) and thickness of tang (2).

RUBBING STONES

Three stone discs are listed in the Bishop Museum catalog (B3615) as "polishers." A close examination of these disks shows that one or both of their plane surfaces have been rubbed against a hard substance, but this is the only hint as to their former use. The three specimens have almost the same diameter (900 mm.) and two of them the same thickness (45 mm.). The texture of two of these stones indicates that they might have had sufficient abrasive effect for wood working, but the third, a waterworn pebble, is so smooth and of such fine grain that it might have been a burnisher employed to give a final polish to wooden implements.

526

Although these discs are probably polishers, they may be bowling stones similar to those found in Hawaii and New Zealand. Geiseler (87, p. 52) collected stones which were employed in a game and about which he says: "Throwing stone. Name: *mai hekupenga*. It was rolled in a game and was often decorated outside."

A quadrangular piece of pumiceous basalt (Bishop Mus. B3546) designated in the catalog as a "god" seems to have been a polisher. One surface is slightly concave and shows traces of rubbing.

The large slabs on the ahus and the curbs in the foundations of the houses could not have been dressed without some kind of rubbing stones. In the

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The Feast of the Boat

Near Vaihu there is a mound, called *miro-oone* (the earth-ship). A feast which consisted in imitating the activities, postures, and language of a ship's crew used to be celebrated over it. Some of the natives were the *matatoa* or sailors and others the officers. The last of these shows was given not long ago, for the father of the present catechist, Timoteo Pakarati, is remembered as having played with great success the role of a captain. On this occasion songs were sung, one of which I transcribe below. This song was also considered an improvization to welcome a man by the name of Toorangi of the Eapaea lineage who came from Chile as a sailor.

E Toorangi a Eapaea e,	O Toorangi of Eapaea,
A te kapu mai hiva e,	He that came from abroad,
Ka hakaava ro	They are pushing forward
I te kaukau hakarava	The horizontal poles (the yards),
E Toorangi a Eapaea e.	O Toorangi of Eapaea.
Ka hakatata haro	They make incline
I te kaukau hakarava	The horizontal poles (the yards)
O Toorangi o te miro,	Of Toorangi of his ship,
Kahu aava.	The sail is inflated.

First Tepano assumed that this ship represented the big canoe built by Tuapoi, a legendary character (p. 382); then he said that it was Captain Cook's ship. The feast is no longer performed, but on the first day of the year the natives dress in navy uniforms and perform exercises which imitate the maneuvers of ships' crews.

Routledge understood that these dances commemorated Captain Cook's visits and that Cook and his English sailors were deified by the natives who erected big houses to celebrate his cult (*hare-a-te-atua*). This does not seem likely, for if the natives really had worshipped the Europeans why should they have chosen Cook, who was the third visitor to the island and who stayed on it a shorter time than the Spaniards?

The *hare-a-te-atua* mentioned by Routledge were probably big houses built for the feasts in which ceremonies and dances may have been performed. The feast of the ship, possibly very recent, was associated with ordinary feasts. My native informants stated that the *hare-a-te-atua* generally had nothing to do with the *miro-oone* or earth-ship.

GAMES

Surf-riding

Surf-riding (*ngaru*) is the only ancient Easter Island sport which has survived. As soon as days become warm, children go out to the surf with small planks on which they lie and let themselves be carried to shore by the

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526 [857] waves. Today grown men swim only when necessary and never indulge in surfing. The many volcanic rocks scattered along the coast make this sport extremely dangerous and it can be enjoyed at only a few places.

Owing to the scarcity of wood, the natives formerly used conical bundles of rushes (*pora*) instead of surfboards. Any construction for surfing was described by the phrase *papa mo hakaeke te ngaru*. Provided with rafts (*papa*), the young men went into the surf and awaited a big wave (*he irimai te vave nuinui*). When the wave reached its peak (*te iri mai te vave rahi-rahi*), they turned (*te tieve*) to catch the wave, stretching their legs straight behind them. With their hands they seized the *papa* and propelling the board with their feet, they let themselves be swept in to the shore.

Tales refer to young men who had surf-riding contests before big crowds gathered on the beach to admire their skill. Ordinary surf-riders catch the breaking waves, but strong young men of old went far away from the shore into a heavy surf, where they caught great unbroken swells.

526 533 A song still popular on the island is supposed to have been chanted at surfing contests as a spell to make opponents fall, but it is also connected with a string figure.

539 E Pua e, e Pua te Ohe Ohe e pua.

(A place near the beach of Hangaroa where the children go surf riding.)

Te na nia he tama
There on the top [of the board] is a youth

Tera Hiro rangi [Te raa, hirorangi]
[The sun, the foam (?)]

Paku, paku
The tide is low

Ruahie hati mai a hati pu.
Ruahie [a place near Hangaroa], the (wave) breaks and spends its force.

Sliding

524 857 514 There is a vague tradition that in olden days the boys used to slide on the slopes of the numerous volcanic hills scattered over the island. They sat on banana or ti leaves and slid down tracks on which they had urinated to make the path more slippery.

Concealing an Object

524 Estella (79, p. 25) describes a game which may be ancient. The players crouch or sit in a circle and secretly pass around some object. One player in the center of the circle tries to find the object; and while he is looking for it, he is abused and struck by the rest of the group. If he succeeds in getting hold of the object, he sits in the circle and the person who was discovered takes his place. During the entire game the players in the circle recite a monotonous chant. This last detail seems to indicate the antiquity of the game.

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Sham Battles

The sham battle was one of the favorite entertainments of children. Divided into two sides, they threw at each other spears tipped by pieces of gourd shell in the shape of obsidian points (*taua pahera*). Legend states that children frequently discovered and substituted obsidian points for their harmless spear points (p. 376). Sham battles (*tuna*) in which either adults or children threw stones was another form of training for wars.

At feast gatherings, young men displayed their athletic skill in running, spear throwing, and other feats of dexterity (215, p. 468).

Throwing Game

Knoche (123, p. 202), describes a throwing game which was probably introduced from Tahiti or Mangareva. I never saw the game and the islanders never mentioned it to me.

A small groove 150 mm. long is traced on level ground. Across the groove they put a little stick 50 mm. long. The players have thin sticks 550 mm. long that they introduce under the small one to throw it as far as possible. The winner is the man who throws the piece of wood farthest.

Top Spinning

Spinning tops (*makoi*) were popular toys. They varied in type according to materials used. The most common top was a capsule of the *makoi* (probably *Thespesia populnea*), pierced through the middle by a round pin with two sharp, fire-hardened points. *Makoi-oone* were made of a clay found in craters. Children mixed it with water and sugar cane juice and left it to bake in the sun. A clay top is preserved in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna (22838). It is a hard, red clay ball, 28 mm. in diameter with a wooden handle 135 mm. long inserted through it. This object is listed in the catalog as a tattooing hammer, but its form makes such a use very unlikely.

Stone tops are said to have been large and were thrown without the use of a string into a stone basin, where they kept spinning for a long time. While the tops were spinning, children used to sing the following song:

Kanini te makoi nau opata.	Spin the top [made of *makoi* capsules] from the cliff.
Ka tuu te makoi miro rakerake;	The wooden top does not stand up well;
Kanini koe te makoi oone o te Rano-kao.	Spin the top made of the clay of the Rano-kao.

Kite Flying

Kites, called *manu hakarere* (flying birds), were made of tapa cloth and the head of a bird was painted on each of them. They were flown by children.

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String Figures

524 533 Only thirty string figures (*kaikai*)[18] are remembered. The only woman who knew them all was Amelia, the daughter of Tepano, who learned them from her father when she was a little girl. He had meanwhile forgotten them. A few simple string figures were more widely known. Each figure has a special chant which accompanies it. These chants are very popular though most people do not understand their meanings and are generally unable to make the corresponding string figures. All named string figures supposedly represent some object—part of the body (hair, penis), a spearhead (*mata*), a mat, an ahu with stone images, a bay, and so on; some represent characters in a legend, and the accompanying chants are narrated as if spoken by the character at a critical moment.

524 533 867 177 The natives state that string figures were used to memorize popular chants and to recall tales. I was told that children were taught to make them and were obliged to memorize the accompanying chants before they were instructed in the sacred lore of the tribe and the art of carving tablets. A few string figures with chants have been introduced recently from Tahiti. Their foreign origin was always pointed out by the natives.

Introduced Toys

524 177 526 Bows and arrows were introduced as toys either by Father Roussel or by Easter Islanders returning from Tahiti. The natives call them by a Tahitian name (*fana*) and consider them quite modern. The islanders were acquainted with slings only after their contact with Tahitians. Father Roussel is said to have taught the children to jump rope.

Gambling

525 The men of the island are passionate gamblers. They play mostly Chilean card games or gamble with pieces of money following the rules of a widespread South American game. Islanders gamble most at the end of the shearing season when they have been paid by the English Company.

MUSIC AND POETRY

Instruments

534 Before contact with Europeans the Easter Islanders had only two musical instruments, the percussion plate and the shell trumpet (*pu*). Existence of the shell trumpet is attested only by Beechey (15, vol. 1, p. 48). The name *pu* is included in the early Easter Island vocabularies, though the present natives assert that it was introduced from Tahiti. A stone with a hole in it

[18] Twenty-eight original string figures have been collected and will be published separately with their corresponding chants.